

Multiple linking fields: MARC 21, FRBR, and RDA

1. Should CONSER limit the number of linking fields used to express a given class of relationship?

Currently, limitations on the number of linking fields are allowed in two situations:

1. CONSER policy currently provides an exception for “numerous related records” (CEG Links p. 17) as follows:
 - a) Explain the situation in a 580 field;
 - b) If the related records contain a title proper with a common part and a dependent part, make a single linking entry field in which the dependent part of the title proper is replaced by the mark of omission and the various related records are represented by discrete LC control numbers (or, failing this, OCLC control numbers);
 - c) Otherwise, do not make a linking entry field.
2. CONSER policy also provides an exception when a single resource would otherwise be represented in multiple linking fields (CEG Links p. 3): explain the situation in a 580 note and make a linking entry for the “primary” relationship.

These arrangement may not be compatible with the FRBR model and so may turn out not to be compatible with RDA part II.

2. Should CONSER revise the full/core/minimal-level record requirements for these fields?

Under current CONSER record requirements, fields 780/785 are MA for all levels, while all other linking entry fields are MA for full-level records, all except 760/762, 773/774, 786, access-level records but O* for core- and minimal-level records. [O* = consult CEG for guidance].

This is the guidance offered by the CEG:

760/762 [main series/subseries]: Use at own risk. LC will delete any data other than subfield \$x. Subfield \$x mandatory for NSDP.

765/767 [original language/translation]: No specific guidance

770/772 [supplement-special issue/supplement parent]: No specific guidance

773/774 [host item/constituent unit]: No specific guidance

775 [other edition available]: No specific guidance

776 [additional physical form]: Mandatory for preservation master microforms and the related originals. Titles are not used in links; a qualifying terms (e.g., “Microfilm,” “Original”) is input in subfield \$c, the name of the responsible agency in subfield \$d, and the control number in subfield \$w (when multiple related records correspond to a single record, multiple subfields \$w are input)

777 [issued with]: No specific guidance

786 [data source entry]: No specific guidance

787 [nonspecific relationship]: No specific guidance

Pending the arrival of the RDA part II draft in July, it may be premature to consider revising these requirements. However, FRBR 7.2 (Basic data requirements [for national level bibliographic records (NLBR)]) may offer a preview:

Table 7.6 (Select a work) and *Table 7.7 (Select an expression)* identify a number of relationships that should be included in a basic NLBR, but only if the relationship is *referential* (i.e., only if the *work* and/or *expression* has little value outside the context of the other *work* and/or *expression*) [MARC 21 tags supplied]:

760/762 ? [FRBR treats the series statement as mandatory, but makes no mention of the relationship implicit in the statement]

765/767 Relationship between the translation and the *expression* on which the translation is based

770/772 Relationship between the *work/expression* and the *work/expression* it supplements

777 Relationship between the *work/expression* and the *work/expression* it complements

780/785 Relationship between the *work/expression* and the preceding and/or succeeding *work/expression*

3. Should CONSER restrict the circumstances under which field 580 is used?

According to the CEG p. 1-3, field 580 is currently used in 8 situations:

1. When optional date information is provided in a “continued by” or “absorbed by” note;
2. When more than one field of a given type is needed, including splits and mergers;
3. When no applicable display constant exists in a linking entry field;
4. On records for regular-print reproductions: for descriptive details relating to an original;
5. See question 1, situation 1 above;
6. For an abbreviated “other edition” note identifying the same title with a different frequency;
7. When the physical format in which the resource is issued changes;
8. See question 1, situation 2 above.

A number of these situations appear to be obsolete since the introduction of subfield \$i (display text) into the linking entry fields, and those involving more than one title in the same relationship (e.g., mergers, splits) may be amenable to creative solutions involving indicators.

From the point of view of consistency, accuracy, and international exchange, it may also be useful to express the more common relationships via indicator values than text in subfield \$i.